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General

Finland is located in Northern Europe, bordering the Baltic Sea, Gulf of Bothnia, and the Gulf of Finland between Sweden and Russia.

The climate is cold and potentially subarctic, but comparatively mild due to the moderating influence of the North Atlantic Current, Baltic Sea and many lakes.

The terrain is mostly low, having flat to rolling plains interspersed with lakes and low hills.

Buoyage System

The IALA Buoyage System (Region A) is in effect. See Chart No. 1 for further IALA Buoyage System information.

Caution should be exercised in relying upon floating aids, particularly during periods of ice, in stormy weather, and when summer markings are being changed to winter ones.

Although, ordinary buoys are routinely withdrawn or replaced by spar and ice buoys, any floating aid may become submerged by ice or moved off station.

Only certain buoys are fitted with color reflectors. Those reflectors in use conform to the IALA buoyage system. Radar reflectors are usually painted yellow.

Cautions

In conjunction with the establishment of GMDSS (Global Maritime Distress and Safety System), it is reported (2000) that numerous medium frequency radiobeacons situated around the coasts of Finland have been discontinued.

Currency

The official unit of currency is the markka or Finmark, consisting of 100 pennia.

Fishing Areas

Fish traps may be 1 mile or more in length and may be found in or outside a public channel. The traps are marked at both ends and at intervals of about 0.8 mile with a flag by day or a light by night. Unless forced to do so by the narrowness of the channel, vessels should not approach within 50m of a trap.

Government

Finland is a republic with the capital at Helsinki.

Holidays

The following holidays are observed:

Jan. 1, New Year's Day; Epiphany; Good Friday; Easter Monday; May 1, Labor Day; Ascension Day; Whitsunday; Midsummer Day; Nov. 1, All Saints Day; Dec. 6,

Independence Day; Dec. 25, Christmas Day; and Dec. 26, Boxing Day.

Industries

The main industries include metal products, shipbuilding, forestry and wood processing, copper refining, chemicals, textiles, and clothing.

Languages

The official languages of Finland are Finnish and Swedish.

Pilotage

Vessels should report 24 and 6 hours in advance of arrival at the pilot boarding position. If the vessel's ETA is amended, a new report should be made at least 3 hours in advance. Vessels should report 12 and 3 hours in advance of departure from a port. The report should contain information about the vessel, cargo and other relevant details affecting the safe passage of the vessel, together with the port of destination.

All pilot stations and pilot vessels maintain a continuous watch on VHF channels 13 and 16. Pilot stations provide traffic information.

During the winter months, pilot boarding positions are subject to change according to the weather conditions.

Vessels requiring a licensed Deep Sea Pilot in the Baltic Sea area should send request at least 24 hours in advance to any Coastal Pilot Station.

Radar stations are equipped with VHF channels 18, 20 and 22. A continuous listening watch is maintained on VHF channel 71 for the archipelago area between Aalnad islands and Turku.

Oil, gas, and chemical tankers of 1,600 grt and above, destined for Finnish ports, should report to Turku Radio before passing latitude 56°N. When the tanker's port of departure is situated in the Baltic N of 56°N, the report is to be made immediately after leaving the harbor.

Request for icebreaking assistance should generally be made through the ship's agent in Finland by letter or telex.

Otherwise vessels should request assistance through a Coastal Radio Station, or from an icebreaker, well before reaching any ice. Vessels receiving assistance should maintain a continuous listening watch on the channel specified by the icebreaker.

Regulations

Foreign vessels should not enter a military zone unless the channel leads through such an area, in which case the vessel must not deviate from the channel. While in a military zone, a vessel is subject to inspection by the commander of the area and the vessel must provide all information which may be requested.

Merchant ships entering Finnish waters must adhere to routes and instructions issued by customs authorities and patrol authorities.

Persons aboard ships in Finnish territory are prohibited from surveying, mapping, taking soundings (except under the

supervision of a pilot), subsurface work, and taking photographs within fortified areas.

Foreign warships planning a cruise in Finnish coastal waters should advise the Finnish government through diplomatic channels. Approval should be obtained at least 8 days in advance. Port Regulations will be furnished to shipmasters upon arrival in Finnish ports by the Port Captains.

The Finnish customs flag is similar to the merchant flag and in addition, it shows in the upper white field next to the staff, the Finnish coat of arms between two crossed black staffs of Mercury. Control vessels may order vessels to stop by international signals on the whistle or siren or by hoisting the customs flag or the flag of the Border Control Service, or at night by signal flares. Aircraft ordering a vessel to stop will circle the ship and fire one signal flare. Enforcement of customs regulations is delegated to Finnish government pilots.

Restricted Areas

Finland has instituted a system of Restricted Areas throughout the whole of its coastal waters. These protected areas include unsatisfactorily charted areas and water areas difficult to navigate, coastal fortifications, maneuver areas of the defense forces, and areas of importance for regional coast guard.

An alien or a foreign vessel has generally no admittance to a restricted area or right to stay there without permission.

The general fairways indicated on the charts that lead through a restricted area may, however, be used without permission by a foreign vessel for direct passage without unnecessary stops.

A foreign merchant vessel with a pilot aboard, may also, without permission, use other general fairways indicated on the chart for direct passage without unnecessary stops.

A foreign vessel may stop and anchor within a restricted area only when navigational safety or a state of emergency requires it.

A foreign vessel may, however, temporarily, for not more than 48 hours, anchor or moor within a restricted area at the anchorages and mooring indicated on the charts.

An alien or a foreign vessel is not allowed to move outside the permitted fairways without permission by the Military Area Headquarters, unless otherwise determined by the Ministry of Defense in an individual case.

Permission to stay within a restricted area and move outside the general fairways is granted on application to the Military Area Headquarters.

Application for entry must be made on an official form and submitted to the Military Area Headquarters in question not later than 14 days before the planned entry into the restricted area.

However, application for a visit not exceeding 72 hours to a specified place within a restricted area can, for specific reasons, also be made after the expiration of the time-limit of 14 days to the local Frontier Guard authorities.

Gulf of Finland

1. Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 60°20.88'N, 27°16.00'E.
- b. 60°21.50'N, 27°23.20'E.

- c. 60°25.85'N, 27°39.10'E.
- d. 60°22.90'N, 27°37.80'E.
- e. 60°19.80'N, 27°32.15'E.
- f. 60°17.75'N, 27°29.00'E.
- g. 60°15.95'N, 27°15.40'E.
- h. 60°14.26'N, 27°01.73'E.
- i. 60°18.90'N, 27°49.10'E.
- j. 60°25.22'N, 27°02.10'E.

2. Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 60°20.5'N, 26°32.5'E.
- b. 60°17.2'N, 26°33.3'E.
- c. 60°13.3'N, 26°18.3'E.
- d. 60°15.0'N, 26°11.7'E.
- e. 60°15.8'N, 26°11.7'E.
- f. 60°17.6'N, 26°16.0'E.
- g. 60°20.6'N, 26°31.0'E.

3. Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 60°11.5'N, 25°50.8'E.
- b. 60°10.0'N, 25°51.7'E.
- c. 60°09.1'N, 25°45.6'E.
- d. 60°11.9'N, 25°45.1'E.

4. Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 60°12.7'N, 25°38.8'E.
- b. 60°07.7'N, 25°40.7'E.
- c. 60°09.5'N, 25°23.8'E.
- d. 60°10.7'N, 25°25.4'E.
- e. 60°10.0'N, 25°30.6'E.
- f. 60°12.1'N, 25°37.5'E.

5. Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 60°08.1'N, 25°16.7'E.
- b. 60°06.1'N, 25°11.9'E.
- c. 60°04.6'N, 25°00.8'E.
- d. 60°07.8'N, 25°00.0'E.
- e. 60°09.5'N, 25°09.0'E.

6. Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 60°05.7'N, 24°55.6'E.
- b. 60°00.9'N, 24°43.5'E.
- c. 59°59.1'N, 24°37.6'E.
- d. 59°59.1'N, 24°33.2'E.
- e. 60°00.3'N, 24°35.3'E.
- f. 60°04.4'N, 24°43.6'E.
- g. 60°06.2'N, 24°50.3'E.
- h. 60°06.3'N, 24°55.2'E.

7. Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 60°01.0'N, 24°23.4'E.
- b. 59°59.5'N, 24°22.5'E.
- c. 59°47.7'N, 24°22.8'E.
- d. 59°56.1'N, 24°23.9'E.
- e. 59°54.2'N, 24°22.4'E.

- f. 59°54.3'N, 24°15.5'E.
- g. 59°54.2'N, 24°06.7'E.
- h. 59°53.7'N, 23°59.6'E.
- i. 59°56.0'N, 23°58.4'E.
- j. 59°57.5'N, 24°01.3'E.
- k. 59°58.7'N, 24°09.8'E.
- l. 60°02.6'N, 24°21.6'E.

8. Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 59°50.9'N, 23°25.1'E.
- b. 59°47.7'N, 23°35.6'E.
- c. 59°45.8'N, 23°22.6'E.
- d. 59°46.8'N, 23°18.1'E.
- e. 59°49.1'N, 23°12.7'E.
- f. 59°50.7'N, 23°20.0'E.
- g. 59°50.2'N, 23°22.3'E.
- h. 59°50.3'N, 23°30.9'E.

9. Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 59°54.03'N, 23°16.03'E.
- b. 59°53.90'N, 23°16.13'E.
- c. 59°53.95'N, 23°17.20'E.
- d. 59°54.40'N, 23°17.40'E.

10. Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 59°48.1'N, 22°56.8'E.
- b. 59°45.9'N, 22°58.3'E.
- c. 59°45.2'N, 22°56.5'E.
- d. 59°47.8'N, 22°52.1'E.

Saaristomeri

1. Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 59°54.4'N, 22°34.9'E.
- b. 59°53.4'N, 22°33.4'E.
- c. 59°53.9'N, 22°32.0'E.
- d. 59°54.9'N, 22°32.4'E.

2. Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 59°47.4'N, 22°29.3'E.
- b. 59°45.0'N, 22°18.9'E.
- c. 59°45.0'N, 22°12.7'E.
- d. 59°51.7'N, 22°16.4'E.
- e. 59°52.0'N, 22°19.6'E.

3. Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 60°06.1'N, 22°24.5'E.
- b. 60°06.8'N, 22°21.8'E.
- c. 60°09.9'N, 22°25.1'E.

4. Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 59°55.9'N, 22°20.6'E.
- b. 59°53.8'N, 22°11.6'E.
- c. 59°54.7'N, 21°53.0'E.
- d. 59°54.7'N, 21°47.2'E.

- e. 59°55.9'N, 21°47.0'E.
- f. 60°04.2'N, 21°58.3'E.
- g. 60°00.0'N, 22°16.5'E.
- h. 59°58.8'N, 22°20.9'E.

5. Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 59°44.3'N, 21°35.1'E.
- b. 59°43.6'N, 21°24.2'E.
- c. 59°44.9'N, 21°19.7'E.
- d. 59°51.3'N, 21°19.7'E.
- e. 59°50.8'N, 21°25.4'E.
- f. 59°49.0'N, 21°34.0'E.

6. Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 60°06.5'N, 21°33.1'E.
- b. 60°03.9'N, 21°33.8'E.
- c. 60°02.3'N, 21°37.9'E.
- d. 59°56.9'N, 21°31.6'E.
- e. 59°55.1'N, 21°21.3'E.
- f. 59°56.0'N, 21°16.1'E.
- g. 59°59.5'N, 21°09.6'E.
- h. 60°02.1'N, 21°09.4'E.
- i. 60°04.7'N, 21°19.0'E.
- j. 60°06.4'N, 21°25.8'E.
- k. 60°07.2'N, 21°28.0'E.
- l. 60°07.5'N, 21°30.8'E.

7. Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 60°09.8'N, 21°19.5'E.
- b. 60°08.5'N, 21°20.2'E.
- c. 60°07.0'N, 21°16.3'E.
- d. 60°06.6'N, 21°05.9'E.
- e. 60°08.2'N, 21°01.8'E.
- f. 60°09.1'N, 21°03.5'E.
- g. 60°09.9'N, 21°18.9'E.

8. Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 60°12.8'N, 21°28.0'E.
- b. 60°13.0'N, 21°31.5'E.
- c. 60°13.6'N, 21°30.9'E.
- d. 60°13.7'N, 21°28.6'E.

9. Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 60°39.9'N, 21°13.7'E.
- b. 60°34.1'N, 21°12.8'E.
- c. 60°37.2'N, 21°05.9'E.
- d. 60°34.4'N, 21°05.9'E.
- e. 60°37.1'N, 21°12.3'E.

Gulf of Bothnia

1. Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 61°01.9'N, 21°20.0'E.
- b. 61°00.0'N, 21°10.9'E.
- c. 61°03.2'N, 21°12.5'E.
- d. 61°09.7'N, 21°19.3'E.

- e. 61°08.5'N, 21°23.8'E.
- f. 61°04.7'N, 21°20.4'E.

2. Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 63°09.5'N, 21°19.7'E.
- b. 63°08.6'N, 21°20.4'E.
- c. 63°08.7'N, 21°15.7'E.
- d. 63°09.4'N, 21°16.5'E.

3. Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 63°12.5'N, 20°38.7'E.
- b. 63°14.2'N, 20°35.1'E.
- c. 63°15.0'N, 20°39.0'E.

Semi-Restricted Areas

Semi-restricted areas have been established throughout Finnish waters and are regulated by the same laws and guidelines as apply to restricted areas. See the appropriate chart for limits of these areas.

Search and Rescue

The Frontier Guard (FG) is the authority in Finland responsible for SAR. The national maritime SAR committee, a group under the FG Headquarters, assists in the operations. MRCC Turku (SPOC) is the international point of contact in operational SAR matters. The coast is divided into maritime SAR areas which are identical to the Finnish Coastguard districts.

Signals

Finnish State icebreakers exchange signals with ships being escorted by the International Code of Signals. The signals are made by sound or light, but not by radio. By night, a Finnish State icebreaker shows a blue light at the masthead. A vessel desiring the assistance of an icebreaker should hoist two vertical red lights. During the ice season one or more government icebreakers are assigned to assist ships from the open sea to the various harbors. The operating areas of government icebreakers are announced daily in the ice broadcasts. Requests for icebreaker assistance should be made to the icebreaker working at the port of destination, or to the nearest coast radio station, as much advance notice as possible being given.

A request should include the vessel's name, nationality, signal letters, ice payment class (if known), radio equipment, quantity of cargo, destination, and estimated time of arrival in the ice-covered area. The captain of the port is in charge of icebreakers assigned to his port. If the icebreaker is not on station, ships required to give prior notice and bound for ports with severe ice conditions should give their notice to the Finnish State Icebreaker Service. Finnish icebreakers are equipped with two rotating red warning lights, vertically disposed, which are exhibited when the icebreaker is unexpectedly stopped or speed is significantly decreased.

Salvage vessels are stationed at Turku, Kotka, and Helsinki. (Cable "NEPTUN, HELSINKI.")

Submarine Operating Areas

Finnish submarines frequently exercise in Airisto and in the vicinity of Iso Tarpana (60°25'N., 22°00'E.), and also at times at various other places in the Gulfs of Finland and Bothnia. In the areas named vessels should always navigate with the greatest caution. Submarines engaged in diving practice in the permanent exercise areas fly a square, diagonally divided red and white flag on the periscope however, this flag is not always flown during temporary exercises.

A Finnish submarine, which for any reason cannot rise to the surface, will send to the surface, either telephone, signal or lift buoys. The name of the submarine is given on all the buoys; the telephone and signal buoys also have two inscriptions; one giving brief instructions on how to communicate with the submarine by the assistance of the buoy, and the other stating "Inform the Navy, Helsinki, immediately of the position of the submarine." All inscriptions are given in Finnish, Swedish, and English.

Anyone finding a buoy should radio Rannikkolaivaston, Esikunta, Helsinki and give the following information as possible:

1. Submarine name.
2. Telephone/signal/lift buoy.
3. Exact position in latitude and longitude.

Send the signal to the nearest vessels with a radio for forwarding. If the radio message cannot be sent to the nearest vessel, it should be sent through the nearest radio or telegraph station or by telephone to the nearest state establishment (customs, pilot, coastguard or police station) for immediate forwarding. The Naval Staff will refund any expenditure incurred.

An endeavor should be made to communicate with the sunken submarine by the aid of the arrangements in the buoy and the instructions there given.

If communication cannot be established, an attempt should be made to call the attention of the submarine by striking the vessel's side under water with a hammer and listening for a reply signal. Such signals should be repeated every fifteen minutes. If the vessel anchors it should be to leeward of the buoy and at least 33m from it. Until assistance arrives the buoy should be watched and a lifeboat kept ready.

Time Zone

The Time Zone description is BRAVO (-2).

U.S. Embassy

The U.S. Embassy is situated at Itainen Puistotie 14A, FIN-00140, Helsinki. The mailing address is APO AE 09723.